

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 12454 060840Z
ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 PM-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 FEA-01 ACDA-07 IO-13 EB-08 NRC-05
ERDA-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /104 W
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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
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C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 12454

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM SENT ACTION NEW DELHI 02 SEP AND IS
REPEATED FOR YOUR INFORMATION.

QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOMBAY 2129

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: MNUC, TECH, IN
SUBJ: INDIAN NUCLEAR POLICY

1. DURING PAST WEEK CONGEN HAS HAD SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS WITH
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PRESS SOURCES ABOUT GENESIS AND PURPOSE
OF SPATE OF EDITORIALS URGING GOI TO REJECT INTERNATIONAL
INSPECTION OF ITS NUCLEAR FACILITIES.

2. A TALK WITH K.C. KHANNA, TIMES OF INDIA ASSISTANT EDITOR
FOR ECONOMICS PERHAPS BEST REFLECTS LOCAL COMMUNITY'S EVAL-
UATION OF THIS PRESS CAMPAIGN. KHANNA SAID THAT ALTHOUGH HE
PREPARED THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE TIMES "NO SURRENDER" EDITORIAL
OF AUGUST 26 HE DISAGREED WITH THE THRUST OF THE PIECE WHICH
FINALLY APPEARED. HE ALSO BELIEVES THAT THE MOTIVATION FOR
THIS AND RELATED ARTICLES IN OTHER PAPERS IS MIXED AND COMPLEX,
BUT THE MAIN STIMULUS COMES FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY.

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3. KHANNA SAYS HE DISAGREES WITH NO SURRENDER THESIS BECAUSE
IT IS CRITICAL OF AN APPROACH THAT HAS WORKED VERY WELL FOR INDIA
OVER PAST 18 MONTHS EVEN THOUGH EACH STEP HAS BEEN
BESET WITH UNCERTAINTY. HE BELIEVES THAT GOI POLICY HAS BEEN
BRILLIANTLY SUCCESSFUL IN KEEPING URANIUM SUPPLY FLOWING
IN SPITE OF CRITICISM IN U.S. OVER INDIAN PNE AND THE GENERAL

AMERIKAN CONCERN ABOUT NON-PROLIFERATION.

4. HE BELIEVES INDIAN PRESS NEEDS A BROADER PERSPECTIVE OF NUCLEAR PROBLEM. HE NOTES OTHER COUNTRIES DEPENDENT ON AMERICAN URANIUM HAVE SUFFERED PERHAPS EVEN MORE SEVERELY BECAUSE OF INTERRUPTIONS IN SUPPLY. IF THESE COUNTRIES CAN DEFER DECISIONS ON POLICY WHILE CONDUCTING NON-PROLIFERATION TALKS WITH U.S., THEN INDIA SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO SAME; PARTICULARLY BECAUSE U.S. HAS PROMISED NOT TO INTERRUPT SUPPLY WHILE THESE TALKS CONTINUING.

5. AS TO MOTIVATION FOR PRESS EDITORIALS KHANNA FINDS THAT THE STIMULUS COMES FROM SEVERAL SOURCES. SOME PEOPLE WANT TO KEEP INDIA'S NUCLEAR POLICY ON THE COURSE IT HAS FOLLOWED FOR 20 YEARS WITH NO CHANGE. UNDER MALHOTRA'S RECENT ARTICLE ON INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY IN THE ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY IS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THIS SCHOOL OF THOUGHT.

6. CONGRESS ADHERENTS WILL UNDERSTANDABLY MAGNIFY ANY DEVIATIONS FROM WHAT MOST INDIAN REGARD AS A SUCCESSFUL NUCLEAR POLICY DATING BACK 20 YEARS, BUT KHANNA DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE "STAY ON COURSE" THEORY EXPLAINS MUCH OF THE CURRENT PRESS CAMPAIGN.

7. MORE IMPORTANT IN HIS VIEW IS THE DESIRE OF THE INDIAN PRESS TO RESPOND TO WHAT IT HAD REGARDED AS PROVOKATIVE
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PRESS STORES ABROAD MISREPRESENTING INDIA'S POSITION. ON DAY OF CONGEN DISCUSSION WITH KHANNA, DAVID BINDER'S ARTICLE APPEARED IN MONDAY, AUGUST 29 EDITORIAL OF PARIS HERALD TRIBUNE STATING INTER ALIA THAT THE LONDON NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS "GROUP WAS ESTABLISHED LARGELY AS A RESULT OF INDIA'S DETONATION OF NUCLEAR DEVICE IN 1974, IN WHICH IT USED TECHNOLOGY AND FUEL SUPPLIED BY U.S. AND CANADA." MANY CLOSE FOLLOWERS OF NUCLEAR AFFAIRS HERE BELIEVE THAT SUCH DISTORTIONS RESULT FROM OFFICIAL BACKGROUNDS IN WASHINGTON AND THERE IS A STRONG INCLINATION TO URGE LOCAL PRESS TO COUNTER SUCH DISTORTIONS.

8. BUT KHANNA BELIEVES THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT STIMULUS FOR CURRENT STORIES ON NUCLEAR POLICY IS INDIA'S SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY. HE SAYS THAT THE SCIENTISTS ARE UP IN ARMS OVER ATTEMPT TO EMASCULATE CSIR (COUNCIL ON SCIENTIFIC & INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH) AND TO HAVE ALL RESEARCH ACTIVITY, INCLUDING NUCLEAR, TRANSFERRED TO USER AGENCIES. SCIENTISTS ARE DIRECTING THEIR ATTACK AT NUCLEAR POLICY BECAUSE U.S. REQUEST INTERNATIONAL INSPECTION ALLOWS THEM TO USE FOREIGN NATION AS FOCAL POINT OF THEIR CRITICISM, EVEN THOUGH THEIR REAL AIM IS TO ASSURE CONTINUATION OF AN INDEPENDENT ROLE FOR RESEARCH SCIENTISTS

IN GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS. THE PRESS HAS TAKEF UP CUDGELS FOR THEM
BECAUSE IT BELIEVES THEY HAVE A POPULAR CAUSE AND THE SKIENTISTS
CAN SUPPLY GOOD, HARD DATA IN COHERENT WAY IN DEFEFSE OF THEIR
POSITION.

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Message Attributes

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